



Contact Information
Jennifer Smith
(920) 499-7133 [Office]
(920) 819-1560 [Mobile]
Lombardi22@aol.com

**PRO FOOTBALL HALL OF FAME PLAYERS
MIKE DITKA, WILLIE DAVIS, GALE SAYERS, HARRY CARSON & JOE DELAMIELLEURE
TEAM UP WITH JERRY KRAMER TO HELP RETIRED FOOTBALL PLAYERS IN NEED**

**DISTINGUISHED GROUP OF FOOTBALL LEGENDS JOINS THE
BOARD OF DIRECTORS FOR THE RECENTLY LAUNCHED
GRIDIRON GREATS ASSISTANCE FUND**

**FUND LAUNCHED, SUPER BOWL WEEK PLANS ANNOUNCED FOR ONLINE
SUPERSTAR AUCTION & DONATION DRIVE**

Green Bay, WI (PRWeb) January 22, 2007 --

(For immediate release) – Former football great Jerry Kramer, a member of Vince Lombardi’s World Champion Green Bay Packers teams, announced today the launch of the Gridiron Greats Assistance Fund, the formation of a Board of Directors, and details for a Superstar online auction and public donation drive to kick off the week of Super Bowl XLI. The fund has been created to assist retired players in dire need. The public is encouraged to visit JerryKramer.com to learn more, make a donation, and preview the very unique auction items.

It was announced today that Pro Football Hall of Fame members Mike Ditka, Willie Davis, Gale Sayers, Harry Carson, and Joe DeLamielleure have teamed up to become members of the Gridiron Greats Assistance Fund Board of Directors. The fund will provide direct or indirect financial assistance to retired players who are disadvantaged or indigent due to inadequate pension and disability compensation. The fund will also provide services to players who need help with medical or domestic issues.

“I am appreciative to all the players who have graciously agreed to serve on this very important board. These Gridiron Greats have not only excelled on the field, but also as human beings. It brings me great joy that this assembly believes in this vital effort and the worthiness of our cause. Without a doubt, their participation will make the difference,” said Jerry Kramer.

Information regarding the fund, superstar auction, donation drive and other initiatives are available at JerryKramer.com. Kramer will also provide complete Super Bowl Week coverage, live from Miami, on his website. Content will include a flashback to Miami 1968, the site of Super Bowl II, which was also Jerry Kramer's and Vince Lombardi's historic final Super Bowl appearance. Vince Lombardi's audio from the Super Bowl II locker room is now available for public listening at JerryKramer.com.

The Gridiron Greats Superstar online fundraising auction will also kick off during Super Bowl week along with a public donation program. The goal of the auction and donation drive is to raise money for immediate disbursement to those players in need. Many players who helped build the NFL into what it is today ravaged their bodies through years of on-field abuse, and they are consequently unable to maintain a quality of life and financial security for themselves and their families due to physical limitations.

The lack of an adequate pension and retirement program for the older players has left many of these football heroes receiving only \$100-\$300 in monthly pensions. As a result, some of the men who have given so much to the game can't even afford to buy medicine or pay medical expenses for necessary surgeries to remedy football related injuries. Some players have even found themselves without a roof over their head. Others live in isolation and loneliness, embarrassed by the condition in which they have found themselves in their golden years.

"I am very upset for the below poverty level Pension I am receiving, which is an embarrassing \$126.85 per month. Because of the way I have been treated, I stopped wearing my Super Bowl ring and Hall of Fame ring. I thank God that I didn't depend on my NFL pension; if I had, I would be homeless and added to the list of my former teammates who Jerry and the others are raising money for," Said Herb Adderley, former Green Bay Packer and member of the Pro Football Hall of Fame.

Although a series of events are being planned to raise money for this worthwhile cause, the fund's initial events will be the Superstar online auction and donation drive taking place the week of the Super Bowl XLI (2007).

Gridiron Greats Assistance Fund spokesperson Jennifer Smith said that, "over the past several months, Kramer has worked diligently to put together the framework for the fund and the Super Bowl week auction. He has spent hours asking past and present NFL greats to go into their closets, trophy shelves and files to pull out game used equipment, awards and other mementos to donate, as well as celebrity experiences."

Some of the featured items that have been donated include Mike Ditka's Chicago Bears NFC Championship ring, celebrity experiences with Howie Long, Merlin Olson, Harry Carson, hand-drawn plays by Vince Lombardi donated by the legendary coach's son, Eli Manning's Cleats, a Fearsome Foursome signed print, and much more. An auction item preview will be featured on JerryKramer.com starting Sunday, January 28th. The donation drive begins Monday, January 29th.

Kramer, the Gridiron Greats Assistance Fund board members, and many NFL greats are also asking fans to log on to JerryKramer.com and learn about the cause, make a donation, and bid on auction items. Fans can learn more about the cause by checking frequent content updates from some of the greats affected by this problem. Content will be added from the perspective of those players in need, such as Herb Adderley and Willie Wood, and also from that of those involved in helping solve this issue, such as Mike Ditka, Harry Carson, and many others.

The idea to start the Gridiron Greats Assistance Fund came after Kramer's missing Super Bowl I ring materialized in an online auction sale in April 2006. The auction house returned the ring to Kramer once it learned the item was stolen from Kramer 25 years earlier. After returning the original, it was decided to auction Kramer's replica ring to raise money for these players. It sold for \$22,000, nearly double the amount experts predicted. The cause itself is dear to Kramer, who has witnessed the crippling effect a lack of financial support has had on former players he knows personally.

"It's amazing how this initiative developed," said Kramer. "It started out with my frustration in trying to get my Super Bowl ring back, but then it turned into this opportunity to assist some of the retired players who helped build the league into what it is today. By starting this program, we are lending a hand to the guys who need it most."

Several high profile former NFL stars have committed to being part of the Super Bowl week auction, including Mike Ditka, Merlin Olsen, Gale Sayers, Howie Long, Sam Huff, Willie Davis, Lem Barney, Willie Davis, Don Shula, Archie Manning, Dwight Clark, Jan Stenarud, Mel Renfro, many members of the New England Patriots Alumni group, and many more.

"Dozens of former and current players have offered their help on this project, and we feel their participation is a great way to help those players who made the game of football what it is today," said Kramer.

JerryKramer.com offers fans frequent updates, complete information about the fund, an interactive message board featuring NFL greats who are part of the project, editorials by Kramer and other players,

as well as an auction preview gallery, complete Super Bowl week coverage and of course is the portal to the auction.

New York-based Steiner Sports (steinersports.com) will facilitate this auction through JerryKramer.com. They have graciously donated their experience and expertise to the Super Bowl week auction. #####

Media/Interview Opportunities Available

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